

# FASTFAQ 1 Introduction to CASAS for ABE and ASE Teachers

## **1. Why do I have to do CASAS testing and TOPSpro Records?**

Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II funding is based on educational outcomes, including CASAS Payment Points (Benchmarks), GED Certificates, and High School Diplomas.

**CASAS testing** earns Payment Points by measuring the learning gains that students make after a period of instruction. TOPSpro **Update Records** count GED Certificates and High School Diplomas. TOPSpro **Entry Records** provide statistics about the student population, student goals, and other pertinent data that may be used to allocate funding.

## **2. What are the minimum requirements for CASAS and TOPSpro?**

(1) A valid **Entry Record**, (2) an **Update Record**, and (3) **two paired test scores** in the same modality are required for a student to be eligible for testing Payment Points. In addition, a student may earn a Payment Point for either a High School Diploma or a GED Certificate as long as there is a valid Entry Record and Update Record on file in the TOPSpro database.

## **3. Who is the WIA Advisor?**

The WIA advisor is a certificated employee at each school responsible for all **WIA Title II** data collection requirements, including CASAS testing and TOPSpro records.

## **4. What are school staff members' jobs in the CASAS process?**

A successful CASAS program depends on integrated staff support with ongoing communication among teachers, the WIA Advisor, and administrators. **Teachers** give the CASAS test, inform students of test results, and use CASAS reports to target instruction. The **WIA Advisor** oversees all data collection, analyzes the data, reports the school's performance to the administration, and gives timely feedback to teachers and administrators for improving the instructional program. **Administrators** review the data reports and facilitate program improvement.

## **5. What is essential that I do on time, every time for CASAS?**

Timely and diligent **CASAS testing** is critical. This is the only way students will have **paired test scores** that show a learning gain to earn Payment Points. **Testing must be done on time, every time**, or the opportunity for Payment Points is lost.

## **6. How many Payment Points (Benchmarks) can a student earn?**

Each secondary academic or basic skills student can earn up to **three Payment Points** in a school year: **two** from CASAS testing and **one** more from **either** a High School Diploma or a GED Certificate. Students **cannot** earn Payment Points from both a High School Diploma and a GED Certificate within the same program year.

## **7. Can a student earn one Payment Point in math and another in history?**

No. A student must earn both Payment Points in the same testing modality or in the same subject area of the Secondary Level Assessment Series tests. For example, if a student earns a Payment Point in Life Skills Math (Forms 031M-038M), the second Payment Point must be an additional increase in Life Skills Math.

### **8. What is a testing modality?**

For ABE and ASE students, the modalities are reading, mathematics, and the subject areas (on the Secondary Level Assessment Series tests designated for many of the learning contracts).

### **9. If a student earns potential Payment Points in two modalities, which is counted?**

Payment Points from the modality with the lowest scale score on the pretest will be counted.

### **10. What is the difference between a Raw Score and a Scale Score?**

A raw score is simply the number of test items answered correctly by a student on any test. It has little meaning since it does not take into account the difficulty of the test nor the total number of test items. A scale score neutralizes all variables, such as the difficulty of the test and the number of questions. A scale score is a meaningful indicator of a student's performance. Scale scores can be compared with one another to show learning gains.

### **11. What are Paired Scores?**

Paired scores are two test scale scores eligible to show a learning gain and earn Payment Points.

Paired scores include a pretest and a posttest. The pretest is the first test of the school year a student takes in a modality. There is only one pretest each year in a given modality. Posttests are all subsequent tests given during the year in the same modality. Students have exactly one pretest for each modality, but they may have one or more posttests for each modality.

Paired scores meet all the following criteria:

- 1) Paired scores must be accurate. They must fall within the valid range of the test.
- 2) Paired scores must be in the same modality.
- 3) Paired scores for tests from the Secondary Level Assessment Series (subject tests) must be from the two matching tests in the same subject.
- 4) Paired scores cannot be from the identical test given consecutively. If the first test is Reading Form 187R, **and the next test is the same Form 187R**, any learning gain is not valid and **will not earn a Payment Point**. If the first test is 187R, the next must be 188R, then 187R, etc.

### **12. Are there different requirements for Adult and Concurrent students?**

Yes. Concurrent students are not required to take CASAS tests, but adult ESL, ABE and ASE students must. However, concurrent students may be tested. It is prudent to test concurrent students who will possibly transition to adult status during the school year. TOPSpro Entry Records and Update Records are required for all students.

### **13. What do CASAS and TOPSpro™ mean?**

- CASAS is an acronym for "Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems."
- TOPSpro™ is the trademarked name for the software system that collects, tracks and manages all data collected from CASAS testing and TOPSpro Records.
- "TOPS" stands for "Tracking of Programs and Students."